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**ASIAN LANGUAGE BROADCASTERS ASSOCIATION  
of California and Hawaii**

1990 So. Bundy Drive, Suite 850  
Los Angeles, CA 90025  
Tel: (310) 478-1818 Fax: (310) 479-8118

November 23, 1999

Honorable William E. Kennard  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Ex Parte Communication  
Digital Television Cable Must-Carry  
CS Docket No. 98-120

Dear Chairman Kennard:

We are writing to you on a matter of grave concern to the Asian language television broadcasters in California and Hawaii, and by extension to all Asian language television stations in the U.S.

Sometime during the coming weeks, the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC") will rule on a very important matter: whether the present FCC "must-carry" rule which requires cable system operators to carry all local TV stations on their systems should also apply to the new digital television signals which these stations have launched, or soon will launch, in their markets.

Cable system operators have gone on record as opposing digital must-carry. However, without digital must-carry, the new Asian language digital television facilities which we intend to put on will be unable to provide special programming targeted to most of the over four million Asian Pacific Americans who reside in Northern and Southern California and Hawaii.

Here is why this is so important to us -- and all Asian Pacifics -- and why we urgently need the FCC to require digital cable must-carry:

Background

The Asian language stations that we represent are independent UHF analog stations that currently depend on cable carriage to reach:

- 72% of the television households in Northern California (the San Francisco Bay area) via KTSF Channel 26,
- 63% of the television households in Southern California via KSCI Channel 18 and,

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November 18, 1999

Honorable William E. Kennard  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Washington, DC 20554

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- 63% of the television households in Southern California via KSCI Channel 18 and,

-- 88% of the television households in Hawaii via KIKU Channel 20.

Must-carry regulations have been essential to the survival of our present analog stations and their Asian language programming. And, based on past experience, it is believed our present stations would have suffered non-carriage of their signals on a majority of the cable systems within their respective television markets if there were not mandatory must-carry.

Our three stations (KTSF, KSCI and KIKU) are scheduled to launch their new digital operations beginning in the year 2000 and it will be equally important that these new digital signals also receive full must-carry protection.

All of them will offer a schedule of predominantly Asian language programming and a significant portion of their programming will be local in nature, providing additional news, public affairs and cultural programming specifically targeted to Asian Pacific residents residing in each station's respective coverage area -- programming which is unavailable from any cable network.

#### The Need for Digital Must-carry

The reluctance of cable systems to carry UHF independents of any kind is well established and is what prompted Congress to enact the Federal must-carry law. Therefore, it is highly unlikely that cable systems in our markets would choose to voluntarily carry our new digital signals. This would severely restrict the ability of our stations' viewers to receive the additional Asian language television programming that we plan to present on our stations. In turn, with a limited number of potential viewers, our stations would be forced to forsake their ambitious programming plans, which in some cases will include individual multicast channels providing separate full time programming services for each of the major Asian Pacific population groups.

It would be difficult indeed to justify the increased programming, production and operational costs required to mount this expanded programming for Asian Pacific Americans if household penetration is severely restricted because of the lack of cable coverage. This would deprive Asian Pacific Americans in Northern and Southern California, where they constitute 15% to 20% of the population of their coverage areas, and Hawaii, where they constitute an even higher figure, 64%, the opportunity to view the additional Asian language programming that would be offered by these new digital television stations.

#### Time is of the Essence


Asian Language television stations in the U.S. serve ethnic groups that are mostly unserved by other stations. They deliver local news stories and public service information that is not covered by so-called mainstream stations. Without full must-carry, many foreign language stations such as ours would not be able to serve Asian Pacific Americans or other minority groups with their new digital signals. They would be forced to program more conventional formats, thus depriving millions of Asian Pacific viewers the benefits of digital Asian language television service. This would not serve the best interests of America's fast-growing Asian Pacific population or be consistent with the intent of Congress and the Federal Communications Commission to offer digital television service to all Americans as soon as possible.

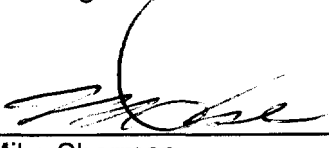
We Need Your Help


For these reasons, we urgently request that the FCC rule in favor of full must-carry rights for digital television signals, so that the over four million Asian Pacific Americans in our coverage areas will not be deprived of the expanded Asian language programming that they deserve – and need.

The future of Asian language broadcasting on the new digital broadcast channels is in jeopardy, and we call upon you to help us.

Sincerely,

  
Jon Yasuda  
President, KSCI-TV  
Los Angeles, CA

  
Mike Sherman  
General Manager, KTSF-TV  
San Francisco, CA

  
Joanne Ninomiya  
President, KIKU  
Honolulu, HI

CC: Hon. Susan Ness  
Hon. Harold Furchtgott-Roth  
Hon. Michael Powell  
Hon. Gloria Tristani